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A Rehearsal in Fairy Land. – Musical Elf teaching the young birds to sing.

IN FAIRYLAND

A Series of Pictures from the Elf-World

By RICHARD DOYLE.

WITH A POEM,

BY

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

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IN FAIRY-LAND.

BY

RICHARD DOYLE.

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ENGRAVED AND PRINTED BY EDMUND EVANS.

THIS is the Prince who travelled from a far country that he might place his crown at the feet of that wayward Fairy, who is seen seated upon her throne, a toadstool. He also offers her his heart, and his hand; and besides, he begs her acceptance of priceless gifts, which are carried in caskets of gold by his numerous train of retainers (Elves of the highest rank and first families in Fairy-land). There are earrings, necklaces, and bracelets of the most beautiful precious stones,—coral not more red than her lips, turquoises almost as blue, and diamonds almost as bright, as her eyes: at least, the Fairy Prince said so.

A

FOREST IN FAIRYLAND.

DAWN.

First Fairy.

FAIRIES and Elves!
Gone is the night,
Shadows grow thin,
Branches are stirr'd;
Rouse up yourselves,
Sing to the light,
Fairies, begin,—
There goes a bird!

Second Fairy.

For dreams are now fading,
Old thoughts in new morning;
Dull spectres and goblins
To dungeon must fly.
The starry night changeth,
Its low stars are setting,
Its lofty stars dwindle
And hide in the sky.

First Fairy.

Fairies, awake!
Light on the hills!
Blossom and grass
Tremble with dew;
Gambols the snake,
Merry bird shrills,
Honey-bees pass,
Morning is new.

Plotting.

Climbing.

Stealing.

Reposing.

Second Fairy.

Pure joy of the cloudlets,
All rippled in crimson!
Afar over world's edge
The night-fear is roll'd;
O look how the Great One
Uplifts himself kingly;
At once the wide morning
Is flooded with gold!

First Fairy.

Fairies, arouse!
Mix with your song
Harplet and pipe,
Thrilling and clear.
Swarm on the boughs!
Chant in a throng!
Morning is ripe,
Waiting to hear.

Second Fairy.

The merle and the skylark
Will hush for our chorus,
Quick wavelets of music,
Begin them anon!
Good-luck comes to all things
That hear us and hearken,—
Our myriads of voices
Commingling in one.

General Chorus.

Golden, golden
Light unfolding,
Busily, merrily, work and play,
In flowery meadows,
And forest-shadows,
All the length of a summer day!
All the length of a summer day!

The Fairy Queen's Messenger.

Saying "Bo!" to a Beetle.

Elf and Owls.

Teasing a Butterfly.

Sprightly, lightly,
Sing we rightly!
Moments brightly hurry away!
Fruit-tree blossoms,
And roses' bosoms,—
Clear blue sky of a summer day!
Dear blue sky of a summer day!

Springlets, brooklets,
Greeny nooklets,
Hill and valley, and salt-sea spray!
Comrade rovers,
Fairy lovers,—
All the length of a summer day!
All the livelong summer day!

FORENOON.

Two Fairies.

Greeting, brother!

Greet thee well!
Hast thou any news to tell?
How goes the sunshine?

Cruel Elves.

A Dancing Butterfly.

The Elf-King asleep.

The Tournament.

Flowers of noon
All their eyes will open soon,
While ours are closing. What hast done
Since the rising of the sun?

Four wild snails I've taught their paces,
Pick'd the best one for the races.
Thou?

Where luscious dewdrops lurk,
I with fifty went to work,
Catching delicious wine that wets
The warm blue heart of violets;
Last moon it was hawthorn-flower,
Next moon 'twill be virgin's bower,
Moon by moon, the varied rose,—
To seal in flasks for winter mirth,
When frost and darkness wrap the earth.
Which wine delights you, fay?

All those;
But none is like the Wine of Rose.
With Wine of Rose,
In midst of snows
The sunny season flows and glows!

Elf, thou lovest best, I think,
The time to sit in a cave and drink.

Is't not well to have good reason,
Thus, for loving every season?
Whiterose-wine
Is pure and fine,
But Redrose-dew, dear tipple of mine!
The red flow'rs bud
In our summery blood,
And the nightingale sings in our brain, like a wood!

Amongst the sports and pastimes of the Little People, there was, once upon a time, a great race of all the swiftest snails in Fairyland.

This is part of the Triumphal Progress represented on a previous page; but owing to the delay caused by the tricks and gambols of the Elves, and the general joke of some of the birds, they have been left behind by the rest of the Procession.

Some who came a-gathering dew,
Tasting, sipping, fresh and new,
Tumbled down, an idle crew,
And there among the grass they lie,
Under a toadstool; any fly
May nip their foolish noses!

Soon
We shall hear the Call of Noon.

They cannot stir to any tune.
No evening feast for them, be sure,
But far-off sentry on the moor.
Whence that sound of music?—hist!

Klingoling, chief lutanist,
A hundred song-birds in a ring
Is teaching all this morn to sing
Together featously, to fill
The wedding-music,—loud and shrill,
Soft and sweet, and high and low,
Singled, mingled. He doth know
The art to make a hundred heard
Like one great surprising bird.

Here comes Rosling! He'll report
All the doings of the court.

A Third Fairy.

Greeting, brothers!

Greet thee well!
Hast thou any news to tell?
Our dear Princess, what shadow lies
Drooping on her blissful eyes?
Her suitors plague her?—is it so?

Triumphal March of the Elf-King

This important personage, nearly related to the Goblin family, is conspicuous for the length of his hair, which on state occasions it requires four pages to support. Fairies in waiting strew flowers in his path, and in his train are many of the most distinguished Trolls, Kobolds, Nixies, Pixies, Wood-sprites, birds, butterflies, and other inhabitants of the kingdom.

So in truth it is. But, lo!
Who comes our way? Fairy, whence?
Thou 'rt a stranger.

A Fourth Fairy.

No offence,
I trust, altho' my cap is blue,
While yours are green as any leaf.
Courteous fays! no spy or thief
Is here, but one who longs to view
Your famous Forest; most of all
Your fair Princess, the praised in song
Wheresoever fairies throng.
Oft you see her?

Third Fairy.

Every day.

And is she lovely as they say?

Thou hast not seen her? Dost thou think
Blue and golden, white and pink,
Could paint the magic of her face?
All common beauty's highest place
Being under hers how far!—how far!

A glowworm to the evening-star.

Scarce Klingoling could say so well!
'Tis true: so much she doth excel.
Come, fairy, to our feast to-night,
Two hours from sunset; then you may
See the Forest-Realm's Delight.

But were it not presumptuous?

Nay,

Enter, an Elf in search of a Fairy.

He finds her, and this is the consequence.

THIS is a little Play, in Three Acts.

Scene: a Toadstool.

Characters: a sentimental Elf and a wayward Fairy.

She runs away, and this is his condition.

Thou art, I ween, a gentle fay,
And sure of welcome.

It is said
Her Highness shortly means to wed?

Next full moon, by fairy law,
She must marry, no escape,
Were it marsh-sprite, kobold, shape
Creeping from earth-hole with horn and claw!

And hath she now a suitor?

Three;
Bloatling, Rudling, Loftling; she
Loathes them all impartially.
The first is ugly, fat, and rich,
Grandson of a miser-witch;
He sends her bossy peonies,
Fat as himself, to please her eyes,
And double-poppies, mock flow'rs made
In clumsy gold, for brag display'd;
Ten of the broadest-shoulder'd elves
To carry one must strain themselves.

First Fairy.

Aye! so I've seen them.

Second Fairy.

This is more
Than I ever heard before.

Third Fairy.

Field-marshal Rudling, soldier fay,
His beard a broom to sweep away
Opposition, with his frown
Biddeth common fairies "Down!
"Down on your knees!" and then his smile,
Our sweet Princess's heart to wile—

Dressing the Baby-Elves.

A Messenger by Moonlight.

Rejected!

Soft as a rat-trap! and his voice—
Angry jay makes no such noise
When bold marauders threat (as you,
Little Jinkling, sometimes do)
Her freckled eggs.

Fourth Fairy.

And Loftling?

True.
Prince Loftling's chin, so grand is he,
Is where another's nose would be;
His high backbone the wrong way bends
With nobleness. He condescends
To come in state to our poor wood;
And then 'tis always understood
We silence every prattling bird,
Nor must one grasshopper be heard;
Which tasks our people; sweet Princess
Being nigh half-dead with weariness
Of ceremonial and precision,—
"Madam, with your august permission,
"I have the honour to remark—
"Ah hum! ah haw!" from dawn to dark.

He will not win her?

No, no, no!
Dreary the wood if that were so,
Good stranger. But enough, I ween,
Of gossip now.

Kind Cap o' Green,
I thank thee for thy courtesies!
Brightkin's my name, my country lies
Round that blue peak your scout espies
From loftiest fir-tree on the skies
Of sunset. So I take my leave
Till the drawing-on of eve.

ATER-LILIES and Water Fairies of the period. Is it a grand aquatic procession? or is it only a party of Water Fairies disporting themselves? or are they racing? One Fairy Water Nymph is drawn on in her Lily-boat with the aid of a Kingfisher; another, floating in a flower, is helped forward by a Duck; a third is assisted by a flying Goblin. A Frog carrying an Elf on his back seems about to jump into the stream, out of which a Fish pops his head, and appears to be making a remark.

They call me Rosling, gentle fay.
Adieu! forget not; here I'll stay
To meet thee and to show the way.

All.

Adieu! adieu! till close of day.

THE NOON-CALL.

Hear the call!
Fays, be still!
Noon is deep
On vale and hill.
Stir no sound
The Forest round!
Let all things hush
That fly or creep,—
Tree and bush,
Air and ground!
Hear the call!
Silence keep!
One and all
Hush, and sleep!

An Evening Ride.

A Serenade.

Fairy Child's Play.

Manners and Customs of some of the natives of Fairyland.

NEAR SUNSET.

Two Fairies: Rosling and Jinkling.

Little Jinkling! friend of mine!
Where dost lurk when fairies dine?
All the banquet round and round
Searching, thee I never found.
Comest thou late? The feast is done;
Slowly sinks the mighty sun.

Nay, fay! I was far away.
Over the tree-tops did I soar
Twenty leagues and twenty more.
Swift and high goes the dragon-fly,
And steady the death's-head moth,
But the little bird with his beak awry
Is a better saddle than both!
The lovely Lady of Elfin-Mere,
I had a message for her ear.

Of state?

Of state: of import great,
I must not even to thee relate.

And is she fair?

Thrice-fair is she:
The pearly moon less delicately

An Intruder.

Flying away.

Wood Elves at Play.

Comes shining on, than when this Lady
From her water-palace shady
Floats across the lucent lake,
And all her starry lilies make
Obeisance; every water-sprite
Gazing after with delight,
Only wishing he might dare
Just to touch her streaming hair.
Meanwhile, crowds of fairies glide
Over, under, the crystal tide,
Some on swimming-birds astride,
Some with merry fishes at play,
Darting round her rippling way.

There was your banquet?

There indeed,
Among the lily and the reed.
Wavy music, as we feasted,
Floating round us while we floated,
Soothed our pleasure and increased it;
Mirth and jest more gaily glancing
Than the water-diamonds dancing
Down the lake where sunshine smote it.
Bright and gay!—might not stay!—
White the hand I kiss'd, O fay,
Leap'd on my bird, and sped away.
Hast any news to tell me?

Much!
Never didst thou hear of such.

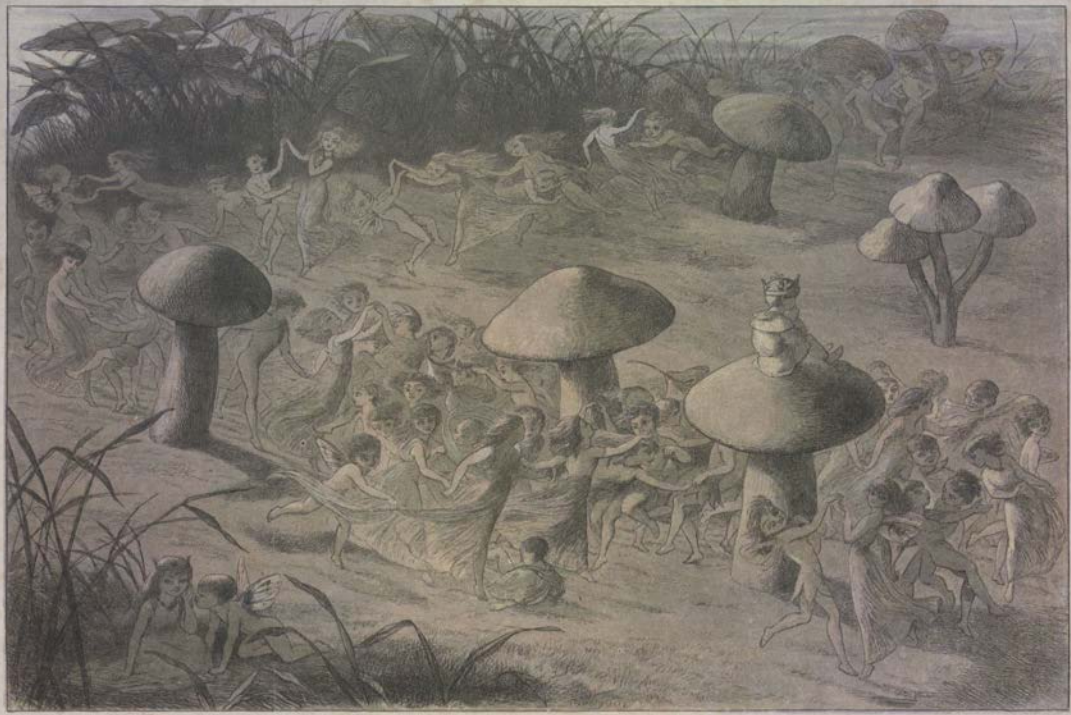
A fight with spiders?—hornets?—perils
Teasing owls, or chasing squirrels?
Or some little elf, poor soul,
Lost in a winding rabbit-hole?
Are the royal trees in danger?

The Fairy Queen takes an airy drive in a light carriage, a rachie in hand, drawn by thoroughbred butterflies.

Dost thou mind the Blue-cap Stranger,
Brightkin by his name, that we
Met ere noontide lullaby?

Came he to your Feast?

My friend,
Ask no more questions, but attend!
To the Feast he came with me,
The chamberlain most courteously
Placing us nigh the upper end.
Her Highness bow'd, and Brightkin gazed
On her face like one amazed,
While the Princess's tender eyes
Rested with a sweet surprise
Upon the stranger-fairy: round
Went cates and wines, and Klingoling
With five new birds began to sing.
Then came a page on errand bound
To ask the stranger's name and realm:
"Brightkin, of the Purple Helm,
"From the Blue Mountain, fairy knight,
"Flown thence to view the Forest,—might
"It please her Highness." It did please.
So by-and-by we sat at ease
In shadowy bow'r, a favour'd ring,
Now talking, now with Klingoling
Join'd in a chanting melody;
And evermore there seem'd to be
'Twixt Brightkin and the dear Princess
A concord more than string with string
To form the lute's harmoniousness.
At last *he* took the lute and sung,
With modest grace and skilfully,
For tipt with honey seem'd his tongue;
At first a murmuring melody,
Like the far song of falling rills
Amid the foldings of the hills,



An Elfin Dance by Night appears to be the subject of this picture at first sight; but a Fairy Queen may be seen seated in the foreground, and it looks as if she and the Fairy King, who has gone up upon the toadstool, and turned his back upon her, have had "words." But it is supposed that the little creature whispering in her ear brings a message of reconciliation; and that is why the Elves, on invisible cues, are shewing their joy by dancing like mad.

And ever nearer as it flew,
Shaping its figure, like a bird,
Till into Love's own form it grew
In every lovely note and word.
So sweet a song we never heard!
When, think what came?

I cannot think.

A trumpet-blast that made us wink!
A hailstorm upon basking flowers!
Quick, sharp!—we started to our feet,
All save her Highness, mild and sweet,
Who said, "See who invades our bowers."

Who was it, Rosling? quickly say!

The King of the Blue Mountains, fay,
Seeking audience, without delay.
Fierce and frowning his look at first,
Like that uncivil trumpet-burst;
But all his blackness alter'd soon,
Like clouds that melt upon the moon,
Before the gentle dignity
Of Her, Titania's child, whom we
Obey and love.

Blest may she be!
But wherefore came the haughty King?

Hear briefly an unusual thing.
His only son, the prince and heir,
Kept with too strict and jealous care
Within the mountain boundaries,
To-day o'erleaps them all, and flies,

Feasting and fun among the fuchsias.

Poor little Birdie teased.

Courtship cut short.

No elf knows whither: flies to-day—
The Lord of Gnomes being on his way,
Bringing to that mountain court
His gem-clad heiress. Here was sport!
Then couriers told the angry king
They saw the prince on gray-dove's wing
Threading our forest; and again,
That he had join'd our Lady's train.
—"Madam! is't so?" "If this be so,
"Great sir, I nothing know." When lo!
Brightkin outspringing kneels. "My son!"
Exclaims the king—"Ho! seize and bind him!"
But swift her Highness—"Stay! let none
"Move hand or foot! Great King, you find him
"Here in the Forest-Realm, my rule
"Whereof no fairy power may school,
"Saving imperial Oberon.
"Free came he hither, free shall go.
"I nothing knew that this was so."
Then says the prince, "If you command,
"I leave you, Pride of Fairyland,
"Else never!" Briefly now to tell,
As briefly all these things befell,
'Twas clear as new-born star they loved;
The Mountain-King their love approved;
And all were happy.

Where are they,
The King and Prince, now?

Flown away
On the sunset's latest ray.
To-morrow they will come again,
With a countless noble train;
And next full moon—the Wedding-Feast!

O joy! the greatest and the least
Will join the revelry, and bring
A marriage-gift of some fine thing.

Asleep in the moonlight. The dancing Elves have all gone to rest; the King and Queen are evidently friends again, and, let us hope, lived happily ever afterwards.

I know a present she will prize—
A team of spot-wing'd butterflies,
Right in flight, or else with ease
Winding through the tops of trees,
Or soaring in the summer sky.

Well done, Jinkling!—now goodbye;
Sleepy as a field-mouse I,
When paws and snout coil'd he doth lie.

Hark to Klingoling's lute-playing!
On the fir-tree-spire a-swaying
Gently to the crescent moon.

I cannot stay to hear the tune.

I linger in the drowsy light.

And so, goodnight!

And so, goodnight!

AFTER SUNSET.

Klingoling and a Faint Chorus.

Moon soon sets now:
Elves cradled on the bough.
Day's fays drop asleep:
Dreams through the forest creep.

When broadens the moonlight, we frolic and jest;
When darkles the forest, we sink into rest.

Shine, fine star above!
Love's come, happy love!
Haste, happy wedding-night,
Full moon, round and bright!

And not till her circle is low in the west
We'll cease from our dancing, or couch us to rest!

Lute, mute fall thy strings!
Hush, every voice that sings!
Low, slow, sleepy song,
Fade forest-aisles along!

Of all thy sweet music a love-song is best!—
Thou hushest—we're silent—we sink into rest.

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